



## Black & Minority Health Fair Sets New Screening Mark

Incomplete early tabulations show that at least 98,000 screenings, including information exchanges, were completed for 2001 Black & Minority Health Fair attendees. This year's Health Fair totals more than double last year's 47,294 mark.

"We were pleased with the new location and the turnout," said Martha Bonds, ISDH Office of Minority Health. Bonds is the ISDH program manager responsible for coordinating Health Fair planning and activities.

Attendees poured into the Health Fair exhibit area during the event's four-day run, July 19-22, to seek out health information and free health care screenings from among the more than 60 exhibits.

Exhibitors included ISDH, with an array of exhibits; the Marion County Health Department, which also fielded a variety of exhibits; pharmaceutical companies; area hospitals; and a selection of health advocacy organizations.

Danielle Patterson, director of the Office of Minority Health, expressed praise for those who helped produce this year's results. "The fair would not have been possible without all the volunteer assistance of employees from ISDH and other organizations."

Pointing to a stack of completed attendee health screening applications, Patterson said that Joe Shierling, ISDH Information Technology Services, is already working to compile a statistical report of the screenings.

"To be a Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) success, we designed those forms so the demographic and health information data could be easily detached from the identifying part that we'll use for next year's mailing list," she added.

Looking ahead, she confided, "Even before the fair was over, we were already thinking about how to streamline operations for 2002."



**ISDH EXHIBITS** draw considerable attention. At the HIV/STD exhibit (above) volunteer Mark Hughes offers an attendee an opportunity to play an educational game to test her knowledge of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases. The ISDH Women's Health Division osteoporosis exhibit (below) draws many participants seeking a free bone-density screening and a computer readout from ISDH Women's Health staff Andrea Klemm (far right) and Joan Spolyar (3rd from right).

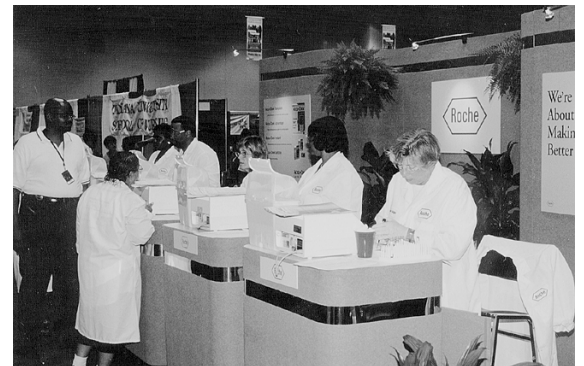
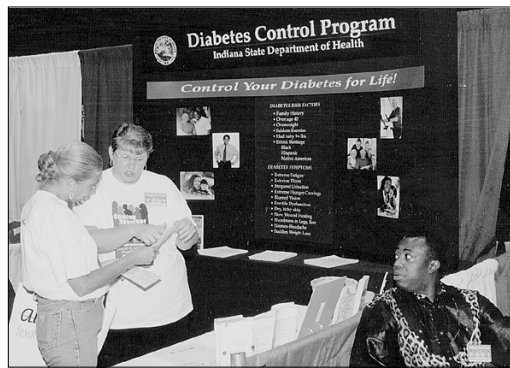
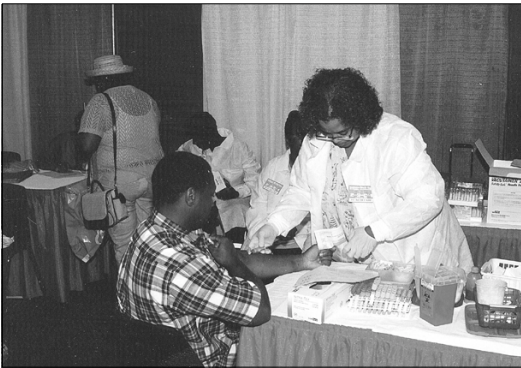
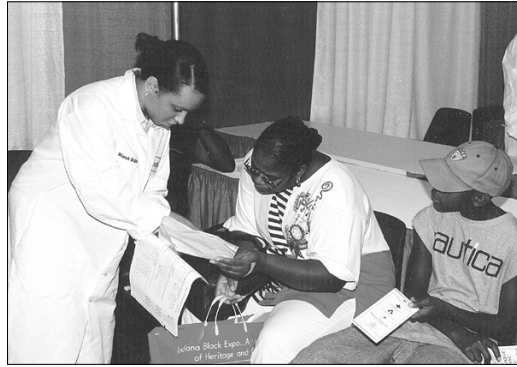


All Health Fair Photos by William Rasdell

*More Photos — page 2*



# *More Health Fair Photos . . .*



**ATTENDEES CROWD AROUND THE SCREENING REGISTRATION BOOTH** (top left) to qualify for a variety of health screens. The other photos on this page illustrate a variety of information and screening interactions during the 2001 Black & Minority Health Fair, a part of the Indiana Black Expo's annual summer celebration.

# ISDH Supports Employee Breastfeeding With Special Room

The Indiana State Department of Health announced this week that it has a new breastfeeding room for employees at its main offices in Indianapolis.

"Breastfeeding is the healthiest way a mother can feed her baby," said Wendy Gettelfinger, director of the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program. "Since we are strong advocates of breastfeeding, we wanted to provide our own working mothers with a private, in-house place to go to use a breast pump."

Gettelfinger said that the ISDH is also looking into developing an on-site breastfeeding room for the public to use.

Medical research has determined that breastfeeding is the best source of nutrition for infants, providing a range of benefits for the infant's growth, immunity, physical development, and cognitive development. In 1997, the American Academy of Pediatrics released guidelines recommending breastfeeding of infants up to one year of age to ensure optimal mental, physical, and emotional development.

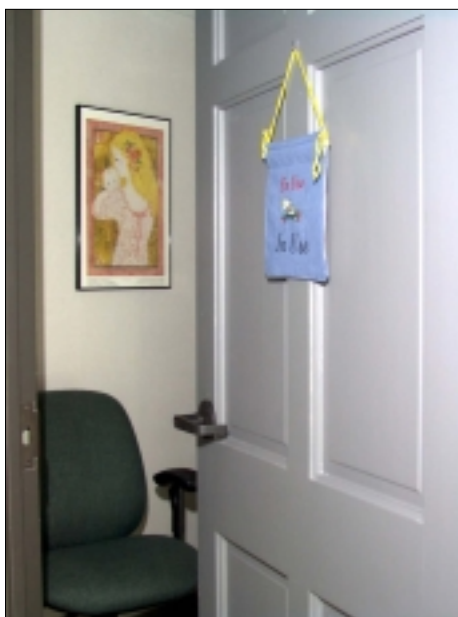
Indiana's breastfeeding statistics fall far below what the Surgeon General recommends in the *Healthy People 2010 Initiative*. The initiative sets a goal of having 75 percent of new mothers breastfeeding, with 50 percent still breastfeeding at six months and 25 percent continuing to breastfeed at one year.

Governor O'Bannon proclaimed August 1- 7, 2001 as "World Breastfeeding Week" in Indiana. The theme for this year's event is "Breastfeeding in the Information Age," and the ISDH and the Indiana Perinatal Network are using that theme to emphasize breastfeeding and the working woman.

"Most businesses are listening more to women. Working mothers now have a greater voice in making health care decisions, such as deciding to breastfeed," said Sharon Farrell, a nutrition and clinic services consultant with WIC.

During World Breastfeeding Week, the WIC and Maternal and Child Health Services divisions of the ISDH and the Indiana Perinatal Network are honoring nearly 150 Indiana businesses that have identified themselves as "breastfeeding friendly" in a recent survey. "Breastfeeding friendly" means a business has a place for a mother to use a breast pump or breastfeed. Businesses that support a breastfeeding employee by providing items such as a separate refrigerator or breast pumps are also considered to be "breastfeeding friendly."

Each company will receive a certificate and, if requested, a decal



**A NEW BREASTFEEDING ROOM** will provide working mothers at the ISDH a private, on-site place to use a breast pump. The special room is on the 8th floor at 2 North Meridian.

Photo by Daniel Axler

## Proclamation

**WHEREAS,** medical research has determined that breastfeeding is the best source of nutrition for infants, providing a range of benefits for the infant's growth, immunity, physical development, and cognitive development; and

**WHEREAS,** breastfed babies are healthier babies who become healthier adults, and healthy babies mean strong families and communities and less health care costs for families, employers, and government agencies; and

**WHEREAS,** health professionals, communities, government agencies, employers, and families are encouraged to provide complete and accurate information in order to assist and support women in choosing to breastfeeding their infants; and

**WHEREAS,** the U.S. Surgeon General has set forth a blueprint for promotion of breastfeeding, supporting the Healthy People 2010 Breastfeeding Objectives for the Nation, to increase the breastfeeding rate at birth to 75%, and to increase the number of mothers who continue to breastfeed their infants until 6 months of age to 50%, and those who continue to breastfeed their infants to one year of age to 25%; and

**WHEREAS,** during the first week of August, people around the globe will observe World Breastfeeding Week;

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, FRANK O'BANNON,** Governor of the State of Indiana, do hereby proclaim August 1-7, 2001, as

### BREASTFEEDING AWARENESS WEEK

in the State of Indiana, in recognition of efforts to support breastfeeding and increase appreciation of its benefits.

**IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF,** I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Indiana at the Capitol in Indianapolis on this 18<sup>TH</sup> day of June, 2001.

**BY THE GOVERNOR: Frank O'Bannon**  
Governor of Indiana



# Mercury Safety Training Supports 'Greening Government'

Eliminating mercury from Indiana state facilities is part of Governor Frank O'Bannon's Greening Government initiative. This is what David J. Wintz, an environmental manager at the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), had to say at a training update held for ISDH employees July 24.

Wintz recommends performing inventories at state facilities to identify and remove mercury containing devices.

Wintz and colleague Max Michael also described the hazards of mercury poisoning and how to prevent and clean up spills. They say that Mercury spills, even tiny ones, can pose serious health problems, especially to infants and young children. They both urge that spills be cleaned up immediately.

Reducing the possibility of mercury spills requires replacing mercury-containing devices like thermometers, thermostats, and switches (found everywhere) with mechanical or electronic ones, and disposing of the old thermometers and devices at appropriate recycling collection points.

Since fluorescent lighting tubes contain small amounts of mercury, Wintz recommends careful recycling of them.

Michael says that removing the devices from the environment, beyond minimizing health hazards, also eliminates potentially costly future cleanup operations.

Michael and Wintz provided a top to bottom review of how mercury is used industrially and by the military, identifying the many places it is found in the

riers are not fully developed and thus can not prevent mercury from causing neurological damage and learning disorders. Adults may also be at risk from lengthy exposure.

Michael explained that "Mad as a hatter," is a term characteristic of hat makers who suffered brain damage from chronic exposure to vaporized mercury, which was heated in processing felt to shape hats.

A focus of the talk was what to do in the event of a mercury spill. Clean up should be attempted immediately to avoid tracking or spreading a spill. Michael says that the longer the wait before the cleanup starts, the bigger the job, the higher the cost of the cleanup, and—most importantly—the higher the risk of ill health.

Small spills from a broken fever thermometer on hard impervious surfaces can usually be cleaned up by the person creating the spill with index cards, paper, eye dropper or turkey baster. Larger and complex spills on porous surfaces call for experts from IDEM, or Region 5 EPA who will immediately bring appropriate personnel to get the clean up started. Assistance is available from IDEM at their Spill Line, 1-888-233-7745.

Personnel at the ISDH indoor Air and Radiologic Health Division conduct air testing to assure that the cleanup meets minimum standards.

— David Pilbrow



**Dave Wintz, Indiana Department of Environmental Management**, discusses the importance of making school, home, and institutional environments mercury free and how to proceed with clean up efforts when spills occur. Photo by Daniel Axler

environment, how easily accidents can occur, and how to go about reporting and cleaning up accident sites.

Michael said what makes mercury such a toxic threat is its tendency to vaporize at temperatures above 65 F.

He says that mercury in its vaporous state is colorless and odorless. It is especially harmful to infants and young children because their blood brain bar-

## BREASTFEEDING - from page 3

that reads "Breastfeeding Welcome Here," which they can post. The ISDH and the Indiana Perinatal Network sent the survey out to businesses all across the state.

"We conducted this survey not so much as a scientific study of which Indiana companies support breastfeeding, but instead as a tool to raise awareness among employers of the issue of being breastfeeding friendly," said Farrell.

According to Farrell, breastfeeding is becoming as important to working mothers as issues like maternity leave.

"Unfortunately, many women quit breastfeeding because they are returning to work," said Farrell.

Studies show that the benefits of supporting breastfeeding mothers who are returning to the workplace include reduced health care costs and absenteeism, increased retention, improved employee morale, and an enhanced corporate image.

"The health benefits for the child are the number one reason for a mother to breastfeed," said Gettelfinger. "More and more companies are now realizing the importance of this issue for women and taking steps to accommodate them."

Businesses that did not receive a survey but would like to be recognized as being breastfeeding friendly can contact Farrell at 317-233-5603.



Indiana State  
Department of Health

## Express

The *Indiana State Department of Health Express* is a bi-weekly publication for ISDH employees and stakeholders. To submit news items, call (317) 233-7336 or send information to: ISDH Express, Office of Public Affairs, 2 N. Meridian St., Section 2E, Indianapolis, IN 46204-3003. Inquiries should be directed to:

David W. Pilbrow, Editor  
Telephone (317) 233-7336  
Fax: (317) 233-7873  
dpilbrow@isdh.state.in.us  
<http://www.statehealth.IN.gov>

Margaret Joseph, Director of Public Affairs

**Gregory A. Wilson, M.D.**  
State Health Commissioner

**Mary DePrez**  
Deputy State Health Commissioner



## Benton County Nurse Practitioner Nets Rural Health Association Award for Quality Community Services

Terry Hancock, R.N., N.P. is the nurse practitioner who has won the Indiana Rural Health Association's Rural Health Award for Community Service in Northern Indiana. Hancock works together with his wife, who is also a nurse practitioner. They practice in Benton County's town of Fowler in northwestern Indiana.

When asked what he thinks may have been the reason for his recent Rural Health Association Award, Hancock says, "Probably my aggressive perseverance to see the Fowler Health Clinic established."

Back in 1998 Hancock recognized the need for a primary care family medical practice in Fowler.

"The location offered the possibility of covering more people in need of health care services, especially Hispanic farm workers, seniors and others with a transportation problem," he said. According to Hancock prior to 1998 there was no medical practice in Fowler, so it looked like a logical place for a clinic.

A \$60,000 planning and development grant was awarded through the



**TERRY HANCOCK, R.N., N.P.** (center), holding the 2001 Rural Health Association Award, is flanked by Jasper County Hospital executives Bill Hollerman (left) and Tim Schreeg, who are respectively, Executive Vice President and President and CEO.

ISDH Local Liaison Office after Hancock won the support of the officials at the Jasper County Hospital, located in Rensselaer, north of Benton County.

He says he told this small hospital's officials, "There's such a thing as a nurse-managed clinic, and I can get state funding to get it started; I can also get some Hoosier Healthwise (dollars) and get a grant for x-ray equipment." Hancock says that won the attention of the hospital, which has

been generous with its support.

"The lion's share of operating funds for the clinic comes from the Jasper County Hospital," he says.

The clinic is a federally designated Rural Health Clinic, a distinction that permits it to bill both Medicaid and Medicare directly for eligible client services—both valuable supplements to its income. From its beginning, the clinic has been designated by ISDH as a nurse-managed clinic, a start-up classification funded through the ISDH for a maximum of three years. The Fowler clinic is now in its third year.

Hancock praises the Indiana State Department of Health for providing those three years of funding that made it possible to purchase the x-ray equipment and a computer. The computer is used for preparing complete summary reports of all prescribed medications for review by the clinic's supervising physician, John Cusack, M.D., in Lafayette.

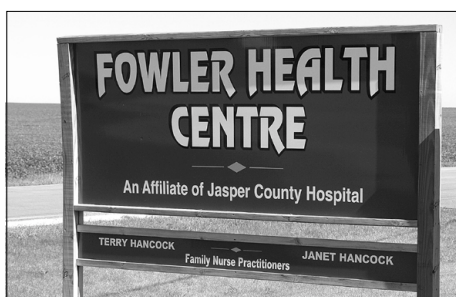
Beyond its strategic geographic location, Hancock says the value of the clinic to the community is its modest service costs for primary care procedures, especially for handling minor surgeries following farm implement accidents common to the area.

To illustrate, he mentioned a patient who turned up at the clinic wanting to be sutured when Hancock and his wife were away on a week's vacation



**CIRCLE BUILDING** (right), in Fowler, houses its Health Centre, where Stacey Varnado, radiologist (left), puts the clinic's x-ray machine through its paces for patients. It was purchased with grant funds supplied through the Indiana State Department of Health.

Photos by Terry Hancock



break. The patient had to travel 35 miles to Lafayette for hospital emergency room treatment. Hancock says the \$415 bill for services would have been reduced by \$335 if the services had been delivered at the Fowler Health Centre. "For \$80, the man could have been sutured and given a tetanus booster," Hancock said.



# DeKalb County Health Department Creates Equitable Recognition for Its Environmental Health Specialists

Being an environmental health specialist is not an easy job. Linda Miller, Public Health Nurse in DeKalb County, has been looking for creative ways to give her department's environmental health specialists, Mike Garrett and Bernie Sukala, the recognition they so richly deserve.

Garrett and Sukala reduce the threat of contagion in their county by tracking down leaking septic tanks, disease-carrying insect pests, contaminated food, and unclean food handling practices in the community.

Miller sent the *NewsLink* an e-mail letter describing how she and her co-workers handled the problem of their unheralded environmental health specialists.

Miller writes:

*"We celebrate Nurse's Day, Boss's Day, and Secretary's Day each and every year. So we thought it only right and proper to declare a day to honor our environmental health specialists who play a vital role in the everyday operations of the DeKalb County Health Department.*

*"We established June 22 as our holiday held in their honor, and on that day we celebrated in grand style.*

*"Bugs and critters of all types were displayed throughout the office, official badges were pinned on the guys and party hats were provided for them to wear.*

*"After a tasty lunch, special gifts were given to the honorees—singing fish, like those they may encounter while inspecting ponds or small lakes.*

*"(Gag) food entrees were sent home with them for 'evening dining,' including moldy bread with critters attached, soggy lettuce with additional growth, and various other 'delicacies.'*

*"Other office workers in our building were encouraged to stop by and wish our environmental health specialists good tidings on their 'special day.' It was a 'most fun' celebration*

*"All jokes aside, we wanted our guys to know just how much we do appreciate them and how much we value their work. The DeKalb County Health Department has a wonderful staff and sincerely respects one another's positions and*



**BADGED AND OUTFITTED,** Bernie Sukala (left) and Mike Garrett take recognition by co-workers in stride on their special day.

DeKalb County Health Department staff picked June 22 to show appreciation for their co-workers by planning 'special activities.'

*capabilities."*

That wasn't all Miller and company had to say. They think appreciation for environmental health specialists should extend throughout Indiana: *"We encourage other local health depart-*

*ments to plan now for June 22, 2002, so they too can celebrate 'Environmental Health Specialists Day,' and pay tribute to the environmental health specialists in their offices,"* Miller added.

## "Doing the Fun Stuff Prevents Burnout"

"Doing the fun stuff prevents burnout," according to Teri Hansen, director of Environmental Health and a ten-year veteran at the Pulaski County Health Department. For Teri and her co-workers the 'fun stuff' is the well-organized health and safety educational work the department has been noted for in recent years.

Hansen says the close-knit staff is teaming up to put their Local Health Maintenance Funds to work creatively again next year. The Indiana State Department of Health provides Local Health Maintenance funds to all local health departments for use in public health projects of their choice.

A large part of the Pulaski County Health Department educational effort, underwritten by the funds, will be directed to elementary, middle, and high school students next year.

Hansen said, "We haven't done much this year, but next year we want to conduct an improved bicycle safety program with all the first graders. A year ago we gave away two bikes at

each of the (three) grade schools and all the kids (participating in the poster contest) got helmets and a bicycle horn. We had a lot of local support with donations to the project."

"We're also planning a special smoking cessation program for 6th, 7th, and 8th graders and a food handling safety program for senior high students," Hansen added.



Indiana State Department of Health **NewsLink**

The Indiana State Department of Health *NewsLink* is a monthly publication for local health departments. To submit news items, call (317) 233-7336 or send information to: ISDH *NewsLink*, Office of Public Affairs, 2 N. Meridian St., Section 2E, Indianapolis, IN 46204-3003. Inquiries should be directed to:

David W. Pilbrow, Editor  
Telephone (317) 233-7336  
Fax: (317) 233-7873  
dpilbrow@isdh.state.in.us  
<http://www.statehealth.IN.gov>

Margaret Joseph, Director of Public Affairs

Gregory A. Wilson, M.D.  
State Health Commissioner

Mary DePrez,  
Deputy State Health Commissioner